Shotter and Neisser. Underwood's is the only explicit attempt at a general review of the concept of strategies. Unfortunately it contrives to be both opaque and polemical. In the introductory Chapter we are promised strange things, such as that "our description of a strategy will look something like a physicist's description of a force". The concept of information processing strategy is inflated to accommodate the geneticists' view of Evolutionary strategies for no discernable reason. Criticisms of the lack of ecological validity of laboratory tasks and of the difficulty of generalising beyond these paradigms are worth serious consideration. Underwood's replies to these criticisms are not reassuring.

This book offers another moderately interesting collection of essays in cognitive psychology. Despite the puffing on the dustjacket it is not "one of the most important books" to appear since Neisser's *Cognitive Psychology*. The mistake here consists in the supposition that because strategies are important aspects of behaviour, a book that mentions them frequently must share in that importance.

LESLIE HENDERSON

SMITH, N. and WILSON, D. *Modern Linguistics: The Results of Chomsky's Revolution*. Hassocks: Harvester Press. 1979. Pp. 334. £12.50. ISBN 0 85527 615 0.

Central to this book is the distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. Smith and Wilson aim to make available to a wider audience "the results of Chomsky's revolution;" the most important result, in their view, is the acceptance by modern linguists of the concept of language as an innate predisposition, and its structure as a reflection of properties of the human mind. Linguistic knowledge includes not only our repertoire of words and ways of combining them, but also our ability to tell when sentences are grammatical or not, when they are semantically acceptable or not, when they paraphrase other sentences, when they have more than one meaning, and so on. All this knowledge is different in kind from everything else we know (lumped together as "general knowledge").

In attempting to describe and explain in some 250 pages two decades' worth of wide-ranging discovery and rapidly changing theory in linguistics, Smith and Wilson set themselves a very difficult task. They have succeeded remarkably well. *Modern Linguistics* gives a splendidly clear account of all the most important issues in current linguistic theory. Some very complex arguments indeed have been simplified and made comprehensible without violence being done to the issues involved. The syntax chapters in particular present a very fair view of the turmoil in syntactic theory in the seventies, and of the current state of uncertainty about the necessity of transformations. This is not to say that every issue is identified and described in detail. The authors chose in these chapters to give a simple, but clear, account of the standard Chomskyan theory and its arguments for deep structure, and then to present differing viewpoints under the unifying framework "arguments against deep structure". Thus generative semantics, for example, is in; relational grammar is out. However, the reader comes away with an appreciation of the nature and significance of the battles being waged in this area of linguistics.

The book has a well-defined and helpful structure. The basic issues—universals and the innateness hypothesis—are set out in the opening chapters. Then follow chapters on syntax, phonetics and phonology, semantics and pragmatics. The emphasis in these central chapters shifts from the syntax and phonology discussions on the one hand, in which a broad view is taken and an attempt made to cover most noteworthy issues, to the semantics and pragmatics chapters on the other, which argue for a particular treatment of sentence meaning, and do not deal with alternative approaches or issues peripheral to the particular argument (there is virtually nothing, for instance, on word meaning). All the sections are, however, equally clear and easy to read. The concluding chapters return to the issue of universals, and tie these in with the concept of the evaluation metric. This is surely one of the more difficult parts of Chomsky's theory, and notoriously hard to explain to non-linguists; Smith and Wilson make it look simple. There is an excellent glossary of linguistic terminology

used in the text, a guide to further reading for each chapter keyed to individual concepts and issues raised, and a good index.

For whom is *Modern Linguistics* intended? It is not detailed enough to serve as a textbook for undergraduates intending to major in linguistics. On the other hand it is not quite popular enough to be an introduction to linguistics aimed at a broad general public. It does not, for example, tell us why one should want to study language in the first place. Its use lies somewhere in between: for the motivated layman who is interested in finding out why Chomsky's thought has been so influential; and as an introduction to linguistics for students in terminal linguistics courses or in other disciplines.

Psychologists, for instance, will find it very valuable. The book contains all the linguistic concepts needed by a student of psycholinguistics, to all of whom I warmly recommend it. There is however one element which, looking at the book from a psycholinguistic standpoint, I find I miss. This is the concept of generative grammar, the notion that a grammar of a language is not a description of what constitutes a grammatical sentence of that language, but a device which generates the grammatical (and only the grammatical) sentences. It is this concept which—offering itself as a treacherously seductive psychological metaphor—was directly responsible for the stormy love affair between linguistics and psychology since the sixties. The authors may with justice reply that the concept of generative grammar is not, strictly speaking, a result of *Chomsky's* revolution; nevertheless, I feel that they have left out one of the more influential impacts of modern linguistic theory on modern thought.

Finally, let me pick a few nits which I hope can be exterminated in a second edition. Firstly, the authors argue on p. 31—quite correctly, in my view—that whether the language facility is *unique* to man is essentially a trivial issue, particularly in comparison with the issue of whether it is innate at all. Having argued thus, it is a great pity that they close the book with the assertion that Chomsky has shown how "the human language faculty is unique and innate". He has not shown it to be unique; it cannot be shown to be unique; and this is one reason why the uniqueness issue is trivial. Secondly, the analogy between memory as unconscious knowledge and linguistic intuitions as unconscious knowledge (p. 22) does not quite come off, since the authors are concerned to show that language users usually *cannot* bring to consciousness the knowledge they have about their language. Thirdly, the authors have adopted a system of phonetic notation which is not that of the IPA; there is nothing wrong with this if they were consistent with it, but they are not—see, for example, the different phonetic transcriptions of the word "pat" on pp. 127 and 128. Lastly, on p. 55 *-en* is referred to as a suffix which forms deadjectival verbs although the examples show it doing this as a prefix.

It is all too often the case that excellent introductions to an esoteric field aimed at the non-specialist are out of date by the time they are published. By concentrating on the fundamental issues which characterise modern linguistic thought and by recounting the essence of the theoretical battles without tallying the day-to-day score, Smith and Wilson have avoided this trap. Their book is the best non-technical account of post-Chomskyan linguistics yet, and I expect it to prove popular and useful for years to come.

ANNE CUTLER

FRISBY, J. *Seeing: Illusion, Brain and Mind.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1979. Pp. 160. £6.95 (with stereo spectacles). ISBN 0 19 217672 2.

This book is entertaining, and very good value for money. Frisby says rather engagingly in the Preface that it started as "The General Reader's Fun Book of Visual Illusions with extended captions," but it clearly grew beyond the original intention, and the captions now form a more or less extended narrative. The theme is the computational approach to Vision, and particularly the recent theories of David Marr. Frisby hopes that the book will appeal to the general reader, and be useful as an introductory text in a course on Vision, "especially one in which the teacher wishes to emphasise a combined psychological, physiological and computational approach".